



Rhode Island Department of Human Services
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May 21, 2019

Honorable Patricia A. Serpa, Chairwoman
House Committee on Oversight
101 State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Serpa:

Please accept the attached report as the State's most recent update on the RIBridges system, which covers the reporting period April 16, 2019 – May 15, 2019. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement;
- DHS staffing and employee training;
- Pending applications;
- SNAP timeliness and lobby/Call Center summary;
- CCAP off-cycle payments; and
- LTSS interim payments.

As part of our federal correspondence, please note our most recent letter from CMS to the Executive Office of Health and Human Services as it relates to the proposed contract extension with system vendor, Deloitte. The State continues to be in discussion with our federal partners regarding the approval of the Deloitte contract amendment and the state/federal split of the \$50 million. Our top priority remains getting the best possible deal for the State.

We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of those we serve and your interest in the health of the RIBridges system and the progress made to address outstanding issues. As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CHAWKINS", written in a cursive style.

Courtney E. Hawkins, Director



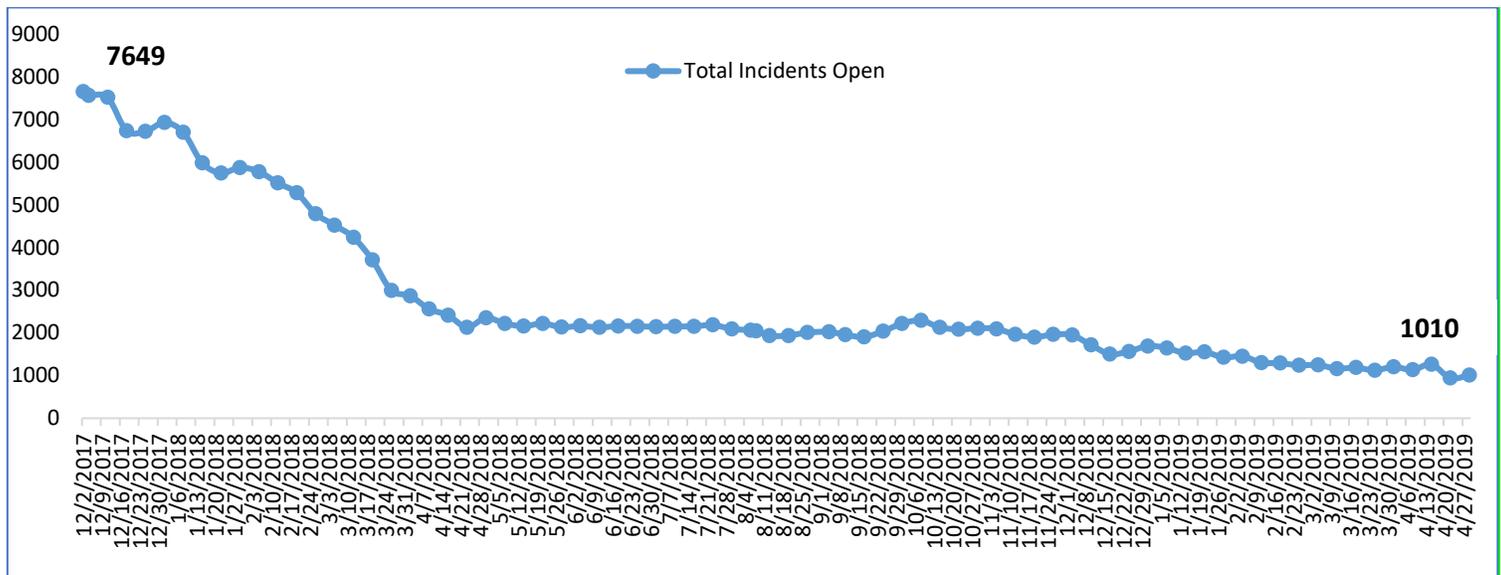
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

May 2019

Our team takes its charge seriously in promoting health, nurturing quality of life, and being there for Rhode Islanders when needed. Our oversight of work on RIBridges is an important part of the equation. With significant improvements to system stabilization under our belt, we are looking ahead to refocus our efforts on ensuring full compliance of the system. This report provides an update on our efforts and progress to date.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

Due to a focused effort on consistent and stable system operations, the number of new and existing incidents (when the system does not operate as expected for a DHS client, worker or provider) has decreased by 6,639 incidents. As of April 29, 2019, open incidents totaled 1,010 – an 87% drop since December 2017.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since April, DHS hired eight employees, with several starting during the remainder of May. This includes:

- 1 Quality Control Reviewer
- 1 Clinical Training Specialist
- 1 Principal Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist dedicated to the Policy Unit.
- 3 Eligibility Technicians dedicated to Long Term Services and Supports
- 1 Chief Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist dedicated to Child Care
- 1 Casework supervisor dedicated to Long Term Services and Supports

Training Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
Performance Management Training	4/16/2019	6 (2 three-hour sessions)	0	20
Rhode Island Works for Eligibility Technicians	4/22 thru 4/29, 2019	36	0	11
Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS)	4/22 thru 4/29 2019	30	0	7
Excel Training	4/22/2019 4/29/2019	12 (4 three- hour sessions)	0	19
Retirement Review	5/6/2018	1.5	0	28
Client Focused Support	5/8/2019	6	0	16
Supervisor Dashboard Training	5/8/2018	2 (2 one-hour sessions)	0	23
Medical Training	5/10-5/15	24	0	18
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	5/8 thru 5/13	18	7	0
Civil Rights/ Voter Registration	5/17 and 5/22	12	0	39
New Hire Orientation	6/3 thru 6/6	26	4	0
Totals		173.5	11	181

*Current number of staff trained is a duplicate number.

New Hire Orientation

- This period we held one New Hire Orientation. A total of seven new staff members attended the training.

Current Staff Overview

- DHS experienced staff members have been offered training on a variety of topics. The topics cover policy and systems training as well as foundational skills relating to customer services and retirement review.

Workshop Descriptions

Performance Management – This training was designed to help advance a supervisor’s ability to give constructive feedback to employees. Constructive feedback will help employees improve their job performance. The audience for this training is anyone who supervises DHS employees.

Retirement Review – Provided by the Treasury this training provides guidance on all the pieces of retirement and is geared to all employees, regardless of number of years with the state.

Client focused Support (learning objectives)

- Understanding how to triage client interactions by asking better questions to pinpoint their needs and then making the appropriate recommendation.
- Understanding the qualities of a good, responsible team member when responding to clients concerns that limit blaming or taking things personal.
- Understanding both their external and internal clients and how to communicate more effectively with both and why that is important.
- Understanding the impact of non-verbal communication and perceptions on communication, not just for the staff handling face-to-face clients, but also for the call center.
- Building a sensitivity to the use of DHS jargon and oversharing internal issues with external clients.
- Understanding how to deliver difficult news and educate client on next steps, as well as, learning when it is time to refer the client to another department.
- Understanding the importance of self-care to avoid burnout.

Supervisor Dashboard Training – This was a one-hour conference call with a power point presentation for participants to follow along detailing out the changes made to the supervisor dashboard in RIBridges.

Excel Training – The goal of the training is to increase the staffs’ ability to work Excel effectively for daily job functions.

- Identify the different components of the Excel worksheet.
- Differentiate between an Excel workbook & worksheet.
- Use the Office Assistant
- Open an existing workbook and create a new workbook
- Enter text and formulas in to an Excel spreadsheet
- Enhance alpha and numeric data in an Excel Worksheet
- Move & Copy alpha and numeric data
- Construct formulas to manipulate numeric data in an Excel Worksheet
- Create a spreadsheet to tabulate and record numeric values
- Change the appearance of an Excel spreadsheet
- Use the print function to create a printable copy of data stored on an Excel spreadsheet.
- Set up the chart function of Excel to represent numeric data in multiple formats.
- Differentiate between formulas and functions in Excel.
- Use at least four functions that are stored in Excel.

Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) – The SNAP Workshop is designed to introduce Eligibility Technicians to SNAP program policy and RIBridges. The workshop approach combines instructor led portions, demonstrations, and hands on exercises to provide a complete integrated policy and system learning experience.

New Hire Orientation – The New Employee Orientation (NEO) Program is the first step in welcoming new hires to RIDHS. Its main objective is to familiarize new employees with the organization, its organizational structure, and its policies and procedures.

Medical Training (section descriptions)

MAGI – This four-day training is designed for DHS Eligibility Technicians, Senior Eligibility Technicians, and Supervising Eligibility Technicians. The course will consist of Medicaid Policy Training reviewing policy for EOHHS, the Affordable Care Act, MAGI, and household composition and requirements. In addition, participants will work on exercises within the RIBridges training environment and will practice registering applications, complete a MAGI Medicaid intake, run and authorize eligibility, gain understanding of interfaces in RIBridges, and understand correspondence.

EAD – The Complex Medical Workshop is designed to build capacity on next level of medical program after MAGI. It covers Medicaid eligibility for medically needy individuals including resource reduction, FLEX spend down, and MPP for seniors. The workshop approach combines instructor led portions, demonstrations, and hands on exercises to provide a complete integrated policy and system learning experience.

Specialized – Provide system-based training for processing Non-MAGI Specialized Medical Assistance (MA) applications that are processed through the DHS Flow in RIBridges. Reinforce key concepts related to system navigation and best practices. Learning Objectives:

- ✓ Processing Sherlock applications
- ✓ Processing Medicare Premium Payment (MPP) applications
- ✓ Processing FLEX (Spenddown) applications
- ✓ Processing Katie Beckett applications
- ✓ Completing Intake/Data Collection
- ✓ Running eligibility and authorizing benefits

Civil Rights/Voter Registration Training – This is training provides all DHS staff with a refresher on the processes for customers to file discrimination complaints as well as how to process voter registration information.

Rhode Island Works (RIW) – This training is to provide a foundation in RIW policy and to increase proficiency in RIBridges to correctly process cases for families applying for RIW.

PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

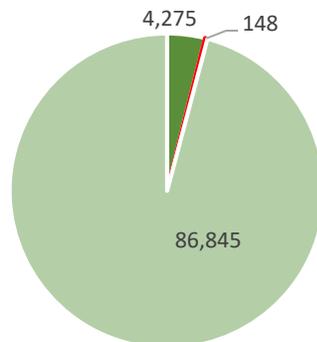
The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of May 14, 2019, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 5,268. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total is 2,152.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	7	13	20	2	3	5	25
SNAP Non	389	158	547	6	5	11	558
CCAP	35	128	163	3	10	13	176
GPA Burial	0	4	4	0	3	3	7
SSP	0	70	70	0	29	29	99
GPA	56	27	83	51	26	77	160
RIW	110	80	190	14	49	63	253
Undetermined Medical	27	411	438	62	510	572	1,010
MAGI	35	28	63	42	61	103	166
MPP	1	11	12	1	5	6	18
Complex Med.	42	54	96	41	321	362	458
LTSS	113	998	1,111	97	1,130	1,227	2,338
Totals	815	1,982	2,797	319	2,152	2,471	5,268

*Undetermined Cash no longer needs to be tracked. Those numbers are now included in other program numbers.

SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The timeliness for SNAP applications was 97.8 percent for expedited and 98.8 percent for non-expedited for April 2019. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.

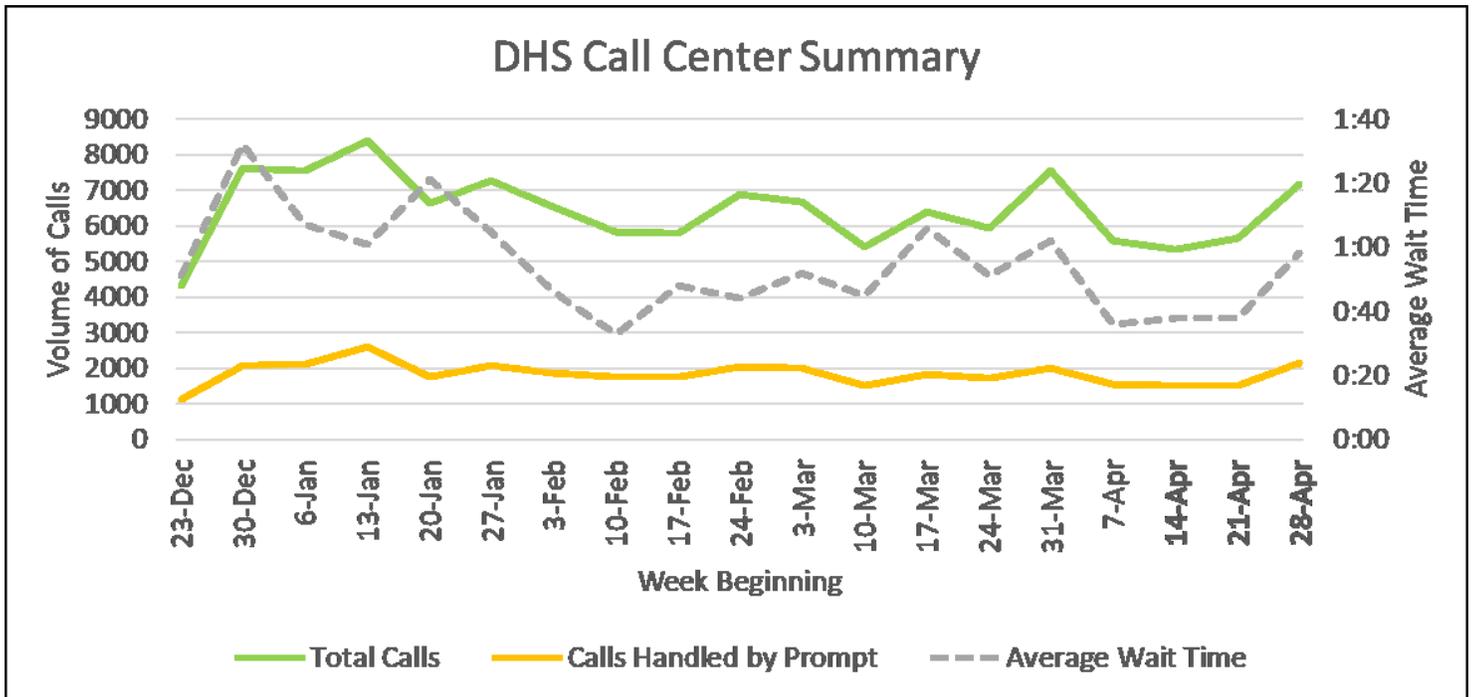


In April 2019, SNAP benefits were issued timely to nearly 76,000 households. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population.

Untimely April Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

CALL CENTER

With nearly 7,200 calls during the last week in April, the average wait times was just under 58 minutes. The six-week average is 46 minutes, 7 seconds.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between April 9, 2019 and May 16, 2019.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
22	04/09/2019	700	\$2,873,043
22A	04/11/2019	25	\$20,914
22B	04/19/2019	40	\$33,170
23	04/23/2019	695	\$2,704,606
23A	04/25/2019	29	\$42,987
23B	05/02/2019	40	\$41,774
24	05/07/2019	703	\$2,848,742
24A	05/09/2019	39	\$32,876
24B	5/16/2019	31	\$47,929

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (22, 22A & 22B)	765	\$2,927,127
Off-cycle (22A & 22B)	65	\$54,084
Provider off-cycle/total	8.50%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	1.85%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (23, 23A & 23B)	764	\$2,789,367
Off-cycle (23A & 23B)	69	\$84,761
Providers off-cycle/total	9.03%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	3.04%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (24, 24A & 24B)	773	\$2,929,547
Off-cycle (24A & 24B)	70	\$80,805
Providers off-cycle/total	9.06%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	2.76%	-

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 1130 overdue LTSS applications pending state action.

Through the contingency payment process, which ensures nursing and assisted-living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, the State has paid out \$18,215,545 in interim payments to facilities for the state fiscal year 2019 (schedule is attached). Our payment reconciliation process remains ongoing as we continue to meet with long term care facilities across the state. In total, the state has paid \$133,161,011. Of that dollar amount, we have collected \$27,478,737 in reconciliation payments so far.

UPDATE ON RECERTIFICATIONS PROCESS

The State has verified that Medicaid renewals were appropriately initiated by the RI Bridges System in compliance with the CMS approved renewal plan.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS AND SPECIAL MASTER

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) are important partners to the State. We continue to meet regularly to review progress on RIBridges. Below is a list of federal correspondence during this reporting period:

- April 29, 2019: DHS' response to FNS regarding identified unallowable legal costs listed in the FMR Report
- May 14, 2019: Special Master's 18th report to the courts
- May 14, 2019: CMS' communication regarding the proposed contract extension with Deloitte
- May 15, 2019: April 2019 SNAP Application Timeliness report as part of Gemmell agreement